



# Sumatra: Its History and People (Oxford in Asia Paperbacks)

*Edwin M. Loeb*

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The fourth largest island in the world and home of the orangutan and flying fox, Sumatra has a long, colorful, and not widely-known history. First published in Vienna in 1935, Edwin M. Loeb's fascinating study has served as the only history of the island and its people available in English since William Marsden's *The History of Sumatra* appeared in 1783. Even today, it remains the only general book in English to explore Sumatra as a whole.

Remarkably thorough in its coverage, *Sumatra: Its History and People* offers detailed accounts of the economic life, society, and religion of all of Sumatra's regions from Aceh in the north through the lands of the Batak and Minangkabau to Lampung in the south. Loeb provides an insider's view into the societal conditions of Sumatra, including land rights, marriage restrictions, totemism, childbirth, puberty ceremonies, divorce, position of women, cosmology and cosmogony, death and the afterlife, witchcraft, industries, and much more. The book also covers the islands of Nias, the Mentawai group, and Enggano, and includes a separate section on archaeology and art.

This invaluable survey of the whole island will particularly appeal to the non-specialist reader in search of reliable information about this exotic land.

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